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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

[Docket No. FRA-2000-7257]

Notice No. 39; Railroad Safety Advisory Committee; Notice of Meeting

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of the Railroad Safety Advisory Committee (RSAC) meeting.

SUMMARY: FRA announces the next meeting of the RSAC, a Federal Advisory Committee that develops railroad safety regulations through a consensus process. The RSAC meeting topics include opening remarks from the FRA Administrator, a discussion panel on lessons learned during the ten years RSAC has existed, and the report on the Safety of Remote Control Locomotive Operations. Status reports will be given on the Passenger Safety, Roadway Worker, Continuous Welded Rail, and Locomotive Standards working groups. The Committee will be asked to vote to accept a task on railroad security.

DATES: The meeting of the RSAC is scheduled to commence at 9:30 a.m., and conclude at 4 p.m., on Thursday, May 18, 2006.

ADDRESSES: The meeting of the RSAC will be held at the Wyndham Washington, DC, 1400 M Street, NW., Washington, DC 20005, (202) 493-1700. The meeting is open to the public on a first-come, first-serve basis, and is accessible to individuals with disabilities. Sign and oral interpretation can be made available if requested 10 calendar days before the meeting.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Patricia Butera, RSAC Coordinator, FRA, 1120 Vermont Avenue, NW., Stop 25, Washington, DC 20590, (202) 493-6212 or Grady Cothen, Deputy Associate Administrator for Safety Standards and Program Development, FRA, 1120 Vermont Avenue, NW., Mailstop 25, Washington, DC 20590, (202) 493-6302.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to Section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463), FRA is giving notice of a meeting of the RSAC. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 9:30 a.m., and conclude at 4 p.m., on Thursday, May 18, 2006. The

meeting of the RSAC will be held at the Wyndham Washington, DC, 1400 M Street, NW., Washington, DC 20005, (202) 493-1700. RSAC was established to provide advice and recommendations to the FRA on railroad safety matters. Currently, the Committee consists of 48 individual voting representatives and five associate representatives drawn from among 30 organizations representing various rail industry perspectives, two associate representatives from the agencies with railroad safety regulatory responsibility in Canada and Mexico, and other diverse groups. Staffs of the National Transportation Safety Board and the Federal Transit Administration also participate in an advisory capacity. The Committee's charter must be renewed by May 17, at which time it is anticipated that proposed changes to the membership will be approved. The changes include the addition of one voting seat for the Transportation Security Administration and five voting seats for hazardous materials shippers and manufacturers.

See the RSAC Web site for details on pending tasks at:

<http://rsac.fra.dot.gov/>. Please refer to the notice published in the **Federal Register** on March 11, 1996, (61 FR 9740) for more information about the RSAC.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Railroad Administration

Notice of Safety Advisory 2006-04

AGENCY: Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of Safety Advisory 2006-04; Tank Cars with Stub Sills.

SUMMARY: FRA is issuing Safety Advisory 2006-04 recommending that owners of tank cars equipped with the ACF Industries, Incorporated (ACF) 200 stub sill design, inspect and enhance the underframes in accordance with the procedures contained in ACF's Maintenance Bulletin TC-200. Owners should contact ACF (see below) for a copy of Maintenance Bulletin TC-200 and for clarification of procedures and any additional information.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Albert R. Taber or Thomas A. Phemister,

Railroad Safety Specialists (Hazardous Materials), Hazardous Materials Division, Office of Safety Assurance and Compliance, Federal Railroad Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 1120 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20590-0001 (telephone: (202) 493-6254 or (202) 493-6050; e-mail: al.taber@dot.gov or tom.phemister@dot.gov).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

Since 1990, FRA, in conjunction with Transport Canada, has documented approximately eleven known defects on tank cars built with the ACF 200 stub sill design (ACF-200 tank cars). These defects included tank head cracks, pad to tank cracks, sill web cracks, and tank car buckling that in some instances led to hazardous materials incidents. In addition, the Association of American Railroads (AAR) Stub Sill (SS-3) inspection data related to ACF-200 tank cars shows significant percentages of longitudinal weld cracks located in the pad to sill area, and parent metal cracks in the pad. These cracks present a possible source of the loss of tank integrity which could lead to unintended releases of hazardous materials from ACF-200 tank cars.

On November 15, 2005, FRA representatives met with officials representing the original builder of the ACF-200 tank cars to discuss the evolution of the design, areas of concern, and proper modifications/enhancements to the sill of ACF-200 tank cars to ensure structural integrity while transporting hazardous materials by rail. At this meeting, FRA learned that the safety concerns with the ACF-200 stub sill design are fatigue related which could be addressed through periodic inspection and modification of the tank cars at certain intervals determined by mileage and re-qualification inspection and maintenance dates. Specifically, FRA learned that the fatigue-related safety concerns with the ACF-200 stub sill design can be eliminated by modifying the underframe of the tank car in accordance with ACF's Maintenance Bulletin TC-200 (ACF Style 200 Stub Sill Underframe Enhancement, issued in May 1994) and installing the P470 angle application head brace. Once the P470 Angle Application has been installed (popularly known as the "ladder fix"), the underframe of the tank car is transformed into what is known as the ACF-270 stub sill design. According to ACF, this program of retrofitting ACF-200 tank cars to the ACF-270 design, began nearly a decade ago and has